

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10
LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 L-03
NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 /092 W
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R 300700Z MAY 78
FM AMCONSUL BARCELONA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4122
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY LISBON

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, SP
SUBJECT: 31ST UGT CONGRESS, MAY 25-28, 1978, BARCELONA

BRUSSELS ALSO FMR USEEC

PARIS ALSO FOR USOECD

1. SOME 1200 DELEGATES AND GUESTS ATTENDED THE OPENING
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DAY OF THE 31ST CONGRESS OF THE SOCIALIST UGT, THE FIRST
TO BE HELD IN "FULL LEGALITY" AFTER 40 YEARS OF THE FRANCO
REGIME. INTERNATIONAL GUESTS INCLUDED REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE ETUC (STUEDELIN), SEVERAL I.T.3. (LOFBLAD OF WOODWORKERS,
SIMONA OF IMG, FOOD WORKERS), AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL,
DRENCH FO AND CFTD, TUC, DGB,
SCANDINAVIAN LO ORGANIZATIONS (DANISH, FINNISH, NORWEGIAN,

SWEDISH --INCLUDING TCO), ITALIAN CGIL AND UIL, HISTADRUT, I.G. METAL, BELGIAN AND DUTCH UNIONS, YUGOSLAV CSY (RADISAV MACINC, SLAVISA MIHALJINAC, AND GORAN DJURKOVIC), AND EXILE LABOR MOVEMENTS OF ARGENTINU, BRAZIL, CHILE, AND URUGUAY. DESIGNATED AS "SPECIAL GUESTS" WERE CANADIUN JME MORCIS (REPRESENTING THE ILO), BRITISHER JACK JONES (TUC), AND -- IN ABSENTIA - CESAR CHAVEZ 'AFL-CIO FARMWORKERS). JOAN CODINA, LABOR AFVISER IN THE CATALAN GENERALITAT AND A UGT LEADER HIMSELF, WAS A POPULAR GUEST SPEAKERAT THE OPENING SESSION. BRITISH, FRENCH, AND U.S. LABATTS WERE ALSO PRESENT.

2. UGT SECGEN NICOLAR REDONDO'S REPORT ON BEHALF OF THE EXECATIVE COMMITTEE WAS HIGHLIGHT OF ACTION-PACKED OPENING DAY WHICH WENT ON UNTIL AFTER MIDNIGHT. SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS FOLLOWS. INTERNAL AFFAIRS. UGT NOW HAS MEMBERSHIP OF OVER TWO MILLION, AND IT ESSENTIAL THAT INTERNAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM BE IMPROVED RIGHT DOWN THE LINE AND THAT DUES COLLECTION BE TIGHTENED. HIGHEST PRIORITY MUST BE GIVEN TO PROVIDING MORE SERVICES AS WELL AS EDUCATING AND TRAINING THE MILITANTS. RELATIONS WITH GOVT. IN ITS PLANT COMMITTEE ELECTION STRATEGY, GOVT HAD FAVORED THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORKERS' COMMISSIONS (CC.OO.) AND HAD LEFT DOOR OPEN FOR THE CREATION OF A CENTER-ORIENTED "YELLOW" LABOR MOVEMENT. EARLIER GOVT- LABOR NEGOTIATIONS HAD NOT BEEN PRODUCTIVE, BUT ATMOSPHERE HAD IMPROVED SINCE ADVENT NEW LABOR MINISTER (CALVO ORTEGA) LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND RECENT APRIL MEETINGS HAD SET DEFINITE AGENDA OF TOPICS AND STUDIES FAVORED BY UGT. WITH RESPECT MONCLOA PACT, NOT QUESTION OF DUMPING THIS NATIONAL ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN -- ALTHOUGH UGT HAD NOT SIGNED IT --FOR WHICH THERE CURRENTLY EXISTED NO VIABLE ALTERNATIVES, BUT RUTHER OPPOSING GOVT'S LEGALISTIC APPROACH TO IT AND STRENGTHENING SPAIN'S EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM. BEST UVT STRATEGY FOR THIS WAS COMBIN- ATION OF NEGOTIATION AND PRESSURE BASED ON CONCRETE OBJECTIVES.

3 UGT - PSOE RELATIONSHIP. THIS PARTNERSHIP WAS NECESSARY TO PUSH HHROUGH LABOR'S OBJECTIVES, BUT THE UGT WOULD KEEP ITS INDEPENDENCE ALTHOUGH, UNLIKE OTHERS, WOULD NOT HIDE THE FACT THAT "WE ARE SOCIALISTS". (NOTE, THE CLEAR IMPLICATION WAS THAT THE CC.OO. CONTINUALLY ATTEMPTED TO CAMOUFLAGE COMMUNIST COLORATION.) UNLIKE CC.OO., THE UGT IS ABLE TO SEPARATE POLITICAL FROM TRADE UNION ACTIVITY. SPECULATING ON A POSSIBLE PSOE ACCESSION TO POWER, REDONDO DECLARED: "OUR SUPPORT THE UGT WILL NOT GIVE A BLANK CHECK TO PSOE POLICY." ANY PSOE GOVT PROGRAM WILL HAVE TO MEET UGT CRITERIA AS SET FORTH DEMOCRATICALLY BY ITS CONGRESSES.

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4. UNITY-OF-ACTION. THE HEGEMONY OF THE PSOE IN THE LEFT
SECTOR OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM AND THE TRADE UNION BI-
POLARIZATION AROUND THE UGT AND THE CC.OO. HAS LED THE PCE
TO CONCENTRATE ITS EFFORTS ON THE LABOR FIELD IN ORDER TO
TRY TO OBTAIN A HEGEMONY THERE WHICH WOULD BALANCE POWER
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DIFFERENCES WITH R PACT TO THE PSOE IN THE POLITICAL FIELD. THE RECENT CALLS FOR UNITY OF ACTION BY THE PCE AND THE CC.OO ARE WORRISOME FOR THEY INDICATE A COMMUNIST STRATEGY WHICH AIMS TO SEPARATE THE PSOE FROM ITS TRADE UNION BASE AND SET IT APART FROM THE WORKING MASSES WHICH HAVE TRADITIONALLY SUPPORTED IT. "WE CANN'T FALL INTO THE TRAP SET BY THIS STRATEGY" IN THE PRESENT SITUATION, "THE MOST SENSIBLE POSITION WOULD SEEM TO BE NOT TO FOLLOW A RIGID POLICY OF ALLIANCES, BUT RATHER ADOLT A FLEXIBLE POLICY BASED ON UNITY OF ACTION IN DETERMINED CASES ATTEMPTS AT ORGANIC UNITY (WITH THE CC.OO.) ARE NOT VIABLE, NOR ARE ATTEMPTS TO INSTITUTIONALIZE A COORDINATING BODY" (NOTE: A REFERENCE TO THE C.O.S. "UNITY-OF-ACTION" BODY - - DISBANDED IN LATE 1976 - - WHICH GROUPED THE UGT, CC.OO. AND THE USO). REDONDO WENT ON TO SAY THAT THEY HAD ALWAYS REJECTED THE CONCEPT THAT UNITY OF ACTION COULD SOMEHOW BE A MAGIC CURE FOR LABOR'S ILLSM HE WENT ON TO NOTE THAT THE UGT HAD ACHIEVED UNITY ON THE SOCIALIST FRONT THROUGH THE UGT - USO UNIFICATION, WHILE THE COMMUNISTS ON THEIR SIDE HAD FAILED (I.S#NTHE MAOIST "UNITARZ"CSUT AND SU RAMAIN SPLIT FROM THE CC.OO.). IN SUM, THE POLITICAL AND LABOR PANORAMAIN SPACE WAS NOT SUCH THAT ORGANIC UNITY COULD BE DEMOCRATICALLY ACHISVED. IN CLOSING, REDONDO CALLED FOR BUILDING UP A UGT WHICH COULD MEET ITS RESPONSIBILITIES IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY.

5. FOLLOWING THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S STATEMENT, SOME 18 FEDERATION SPOKESMEN TOOK THE FLOOR TO CRITICIZE CERTAIN ASPECTS OR PERCEIVED OMISSIONS OF THE REPORT. SOME OF THE MORE SIGNIFICANT CRITICISMS DEALT WITH SHORTCOMINGS IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDUSTRIAL FEDERATION STRUCTURE AS AGAINST THE PROVINCIAL, LACK OF AN ADEQUATE INFORMATION AND PRESS SERVICE, COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE UGT'S PLANT ELECTION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CAMPAIGN TACTICS, INSUFFICIENT FRATERNAL CONTACT WITH THIRD WORLD LABOR GROUPS, AND UNHAPPINESS WITH THE WAGE LIMITATIONS OF MONCLOA PACT. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REBUTALS WERE VERYH WELL HANDLED, AND THE DELEGATIONS VOTED THEIR APPROVAL OF THE REPORT 36 TO 3 WITH 16 ABSTENTIONS. MAY 26 AND 27 TO BE DEVOTED TO COMMITTEE WORK. OFFICERS ARE TO BE ELECTED ON MAY 28, WITH REDONDO HEAVILY FAVORED TO WIN RE-ELECTION.

6. COMMENT. REDONDO'S STATEMENTS REGARDING RELATIONS WITH THE PSOE AND UNITY OF ACTION ARE OF CONSIDERABLE SIGNIFICANCE, AND HAVE RECEIVED WIDESPREAD MEDIA COVERAGE. HIS ASSERTION THAT THE UGT DOES NOT INTEND TO BECOME THE PUPPET OF THE PSOE WILL HELP MOLLIFY IMPORTANT SEGMENTS OF THE UGT MEMBERSHIP (ESPECIALLY THE INTEGRATED USO ELEMENTS) WHO

FEEL THAT THE ACT WAS TOO MUCH UNDER THE THUMB OF THE PARTY.
THE STRONG STAND AGAINST INDISCRIMINATE UNITY OF ACTION
WITH THE CC.OO. IS PARTICULARLY WELCOME, AND HOPEFULLY
REFLECTS UGT AWARENESS THAT THE FIRE SONG OF LABOR UNITY
AS PLAYED BY THE COMMUNISTS IS DANGEROUS MUSIC TO DANCE TO.
SINN

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